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CE 628 Discipleship Development in the Home

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Discipleship Development in the Home (3 hours credit)
CE 628, PM 628, YM 628, CM 628

(Originally a text book for this class before learning that only a selected number of copies are available. Class presentations will draw from this text as it research based and focused on the religious education of the family).

Don Joy, *Risk-proofing Your Family*.

(A family systems look at understanding the dynamics of different families. Offers hope especially to parents faced with raising teens during the years of being thrown into the sexual crucible.)

Lee N. June (ed.), *The Black Family: Past, Present, & Future*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

(Sixteen writers address fifteen issues prominent in the African American communities.)

James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

(A lifespan approach that brings together the work of Freud, Erikson, Piaget with Kierkegaard, Barth, and Pannenberg)

Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*.

(A deeply spiritual view of marriage written by an author who in contemplating the celibate priesthood struggled with the competing need he felt for solitude and for companionship)

Mary Pipher, *Reviving Ophelia*.

(A penetrating look at the societal expectations and judgments placed on adolescent females and the difficult emotional journey that accompanies it)

Sheldon Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*. San Francisco: Harper, 1980.

(A love story of a couple who tasted the heights and the depths of love in their search for faith and meaning. Included in their journey are eighteen letters written by C.S. Lewis who leads them to Christian Faith and through the redefinition of their love.)

I am open to you suggesting other books or substituting for the required texts from this list.

Course Objectives

The student showing competence in this class will be able to:

1. Connect the origins of the family, family roles, and relationships to a Trinitarian perspective from the intent of the Creation account.
2. Recognize the effects of the fall, the disintegration of family life, and the yet unshakable confidence of God to utilize families and communities of faith in His redemptive plan.
3. Describe sociological and developmental trends that are changing the definition, structure, and outcomes of the contemporary family.
4. Deepen an understanding of parent-child attachment and deprivation and their developmental effects on individuals.
5. Identify family systems and the consequent roles they create for members in those systems.
6. Image the components of healthy families and marriages and how to encourage their growth.
7. Recognize the power and potential of congregational communities to intercept, surround, heal, and empower those suffering from family loss, tragedy, and pain.
8. Identify gender differences in identity development and self-functioning, and the uniqueness each gender tends to bring to the family equation.
9. Create congregational strategies for ministering to families.

Attendance and Participation

Many loan-granting institutions are now requiring attendance records on students for accounting purposes. Therefore, the faculty has a new obligation to take daily attendance records in every class and report any repetitive absences. Therefore, although attendance is not figured numerically into your grade, it is highly valued and can be taken into consideration in determining a borderline grade. Classroom experiences will be designed to yield instructional outcomes that are not reproducible outside the classroom.

Personal Reflection Papers (Required for the five assigned texts and the one chosen from class)

For each text write a three page reflection paper using approximately one page for each of the following responses. Please note this is both a cognitive exercise designed to assess whether or not you are obtaining the objectives for this course and an attempt for you to look personally at your own journey. I encourage you as you write to invite the Holy Spirit to probe places of pain, to name and give understanding to what has shaped you from the past, and to point toward greater wholeness, and to strategic points of ministry.

Page One - Consider the objectives for this course. How does this text help you address these objectives? Demonstrate in your first page how reading this text has helped you think about these objectives. What did the author desire to accomplish in the writing of this text and was he (unfortunately they are all male authors) successful?

Page Two - Report the concrete experiences and reflective observations that this material stirred for you while reading this book. These may be personal anecdotes, observations about your family and others you have observed, ideas that you wrestled with or felt convicted by, questions that you felt the book answered or failed to address, connections you made to other topics presented in class, etc.

Page Three – Detail the commitments/changes you want to make personally, in your family, or in ministry resulting from the reading of this book. Examples may include such things as repairing a broken relationship, deepening a commitment in marriage or to children, practicing a deeper level of relationship integrity, planning to utilize this material in ministry, or future study areas that you need to pursue. Be as specific as possible in this section and aim at practical personal steps and proposed uses in future ministry situations.

(Evaluation of the book reviews will consist primarily of how thoroughly you answered each of these areas).

The “Exercise in Essential Living”

This phrase comes from Henry David Thoreau’s experiential accounting of *Walden* in which he attempted to determine the bare bones of the necessity of life. Although we would not want to give Thoreau too much authority, his endeavor toward the simplicity of what’s essential seems especially pertinent for families today. Thus, on a smaller scale this assignment asks you to take at least four hours of one full day (even better if you could commit a full sabbath to it) and conduct your own “exercise in essential living.” It asks you to consider what really are the

essentials of living fully? what really replenishes your soul?, what gladdens your heart?, what puts the fizz back in your doctor pepper?

Or, to be even more Christlike, aim these questions not at yourself, but at how you could bless your family, spouse, and/or significant other? What kind of a day could you create for them that at the end of it they would say “Ahhhh, today was the most “essential” experience I’ve had in years!! Today I was really loved!! Today we really connected.”

Then take as many pages as there is energy in the experience for you to communicate what you have learned and come to discover about how to live a soulful, essential life and/or how you give it to others. Don’t be afraid to report as well on any frustration you may have had in the experience, these too may be rich sources of enlightenment for you, revealing why so many of us “live lives of quiet desperation,” disconnected from those we purport to love most.

Journals from Class Sessions

I fully anticipate that in almost every class session and/or reading assignment you will find rich material for personal reflection and meaning making. Though some of these probes may be irritating, I believe them to be the “stuff” the Holy Spirit would desire for us to rub and polish into the pearls of our soul. I find journaling to be a rich way to be intentionally involved in this refinishing work. (If you have another method - e.g. assembling life’s experiences through a collection of music, painting, writing poetry, or if you process best by talking it out with a significant other - whatever helps you move through life’s experiences and deepen your understanding, propose it as an alternative). Throughout the semester make at least one weekly journal entry in which you address something that captured your attention or follow the suggestions that I make in class. (Plan on a total of ten entries; you can have two weeks of grace and can skip a week when you do the exercise in essential living). If you find a week in which class presentations yield little self-reflection, try the following questions for starters:

- Being made in the “image of God” implies that I have the ability to create. I feel most creative when I _____?
- Does the family systems typology offer me any insight into my family. If so how? or is my experience something no one has really helped me to understand?
- How do I intend to teach my children or those under my pastoral care what grace and holiness feel like? How will they learn how to pray? For what and how am I helping them to extend gratitude and to give thanks?
- What is my “attachment style”? How did it form and how does it affect me today?
- What was my dominant childhood feeling? How do I live today as an attempt to maintain or to avoid that feeling?
- What would it be like to be married to someone like me?
- What would I experience and feel at church if I were a single person, thirty to forty years old attending a Sunday school class and a worship service?
- What one thing could I change that would make a fifty percent difference in the way I’m now living?
- What question do I most hope that nobody will ever ask me at seminary?

The Paper/Project

This assignment is the more academic one in this course and asks you to study a family, ministry, or personal issue in which you feel like you or the church needs more insight. Examples might include: designs for family devotionals, characteristics of minority families, what to teach

about sexuality at home, working out a theology of divorce, ministering to infertile couples, outlining a family oriented course for a church setting, starting a twelve-step ministry, etc. Although I hope you will aim for excellence, I don't insist that this be a thoroughly researched paper. Rather, I'd like for you to approach it as you might if you had a few weeks to research a burning issue that your church needed you to address next month in a seminar, from the pulpit, etc., or one that you needed to personally explore.

My expectation would be that you peruse the library for the five best books on the subject and/or the internet for related topics and/or ask experts for the best resources. Then write about three to five pages, with references, according to what you've found. Whereas I expect you to read the assigned textbooks thoroughly, this assignment pushes you to broadly overview the stuff available on a given topic and start a habit of quickly perusing it to find what might be helpful for a particular situation.

Grading Scale

1. Response papers to the six texts - 60 points total (10 points each)
2. Exercise in Essential Living 15 points
3. Journal Entries 15 points
4. Final Project 10 points

(Note: If time or energy constraints are an issue for you this semester it is possible to choose to eliminate the final assignment and settle for a lower grade)

The following descriptions from the Asbury catalogue will provide the guidelines for grades based on a ten point scale.

A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Planned Spring Agenda

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Assignments/Class Focus</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Feb 6	Intro, Syllabus	
Feb 8 & 13	Creation – God's intent	Cohen 1, Crabb 1-8
Feb 15	The Fall	Cohen 2, Crabb 9-12
Feb 20 & 22	Family in Scripture	Crabb 13-17
Feb 27 & Mar 1	Sociological/Developmental Foci on the family	Handout/Discussion of crabb (PRP on Crabb is due - 2/27)
Mar 6 & 8	Conception, birth bonding and attachment	Cohen 4,5, 6
Mar 13 & 15	Family Systems	Joy - Intro, 1-4
Mar 20 & 22	Adolescent faith development	Joy - 5-9 (PRP on Joy is due 3/22)
Mar 27 & 29	Young adulthood	Wangerin 1-8
April 3 & 5	Marriage Singles have families too	Wangerin 9-17 PRP on Wangerin due before you leave for break)
April 10-12 Reading week		

April 17 & 19	Divorce/Remarriage	Read in selected book
April 24 & 26	Family focused ministry	Freudenburg - Sect 1 & 2
May 1	Step/blended families	Cohen 3, Freudenburg Sect3/4 (PRP on Freudenburg due)
May 3 & 8	Middle and later adulthood	Handout?
May 10	Class presentations	Handout (PRP on Cohen due)
May 16 1:00-3:00p.m.	Class presentations	